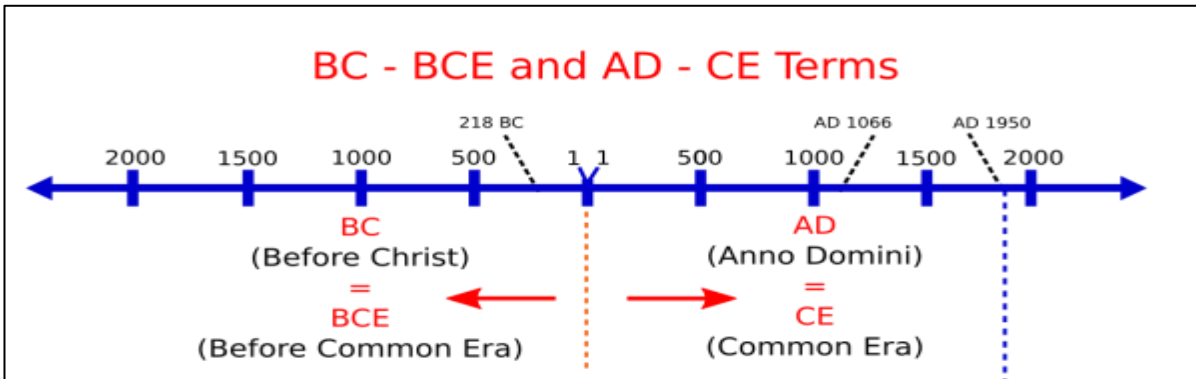


Section 1 – Who were the Maya and where did they live?



The Maya first developed their civilisation in around 2000 BC. During the Maya civilisation, Britain went through the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages, including Stonehenge, to Roman Britain, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval and Tudor England. In around 1600 AD the Maya were conquered and destroyed by the Spanish invaders.

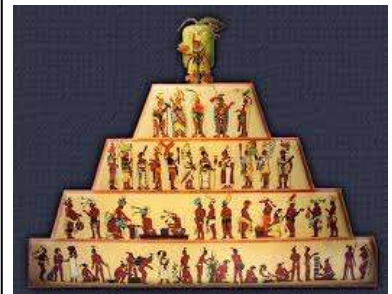
Today, the area the Maya used to live in spreads over 5 countries in Central America. This is close to the equator and the area has tropical, desert and mountainous areas.



Section 2 - Why were the Mayans successful?

There are 4 main reasons Mayans were successful:

1. They were **good farmers** – They used a technique called slash and burn - where they would cut the crops and burn them so they could use the ash as fertiliser. The crops were plentiful so the population could grow.
2. They were **skilled hunters** - They domesticated dogs so they could use them for hunting. They hunted deer, pigs and turkeys.
3. The Maya were **good traders** – They traded products such as jade, salt and textiles. This trade led to wealth.
4. They had **hierarchy and organisation** in their society - The Mayans used a class system. There was a leader, upper class, middle and lower class.



Civilisation means an advanced stage of organisation. This means it has:

Laws

Culture

A regular way of getting **food**

A way of **protecting** the people

The Mayans were considered an advanced and successful **civilisation**:

- They were skilled weavers, potters and farmers.
- They cleared routes through jungles and swamps to create trade routes.
- They developed astronomy, calendar systems and hieroglyphic writing.
- They had a rich culture. Art and religious rituals were important.

Section 3 – What caused the decline of the Mayans?

Some changes happen slowly while others happen more quickly. The decline of the Maya took about 200 years. By 900 CE, Maya cities were mostly deserted and became ruins. Archaeologists don't really know what happened but they have different theories. **It is important to consider several reasons to explain cause and consequence of events:**



1. Warfare theory - The Maya cities were constantly at war with each other. Could this be responsible for the downfall of the civilisation?
2. Farming catastrophe theory - Did the large population in the cities put strain on the food production causing the downfall of the ancient Maya?
3. Disease theory - Were contagious diseases spread by parasites that are found near the tropical rainforest areas responsible for the decline of the Mayans?
4. Drought theory - Scientists have proven that around 900AD, there was a drought which meant no rainfall.

Section 4 – Settlements and Land Use

Land use is the way in which land is used by people. People use land for things such as agriculture, residential use (homes), industry (factories), recreation etc.

Settlements are places where people live and sometimes work.



A City:
A very large and important town which normally contains the offices of the regional government, major businesses and a number of big name shops

A Town:
A place with a town hall, it's own council and the location of services such as shops and a market.

A Village:
A very small town, normally in the countryside. A village may have one or two small shops but probably not a regular market or town hall and council

A Hamlet:
A very small village with just a few houses or farms and maybe a church or chapel and maybe also a bar or pub. Usually there are no shops in a hamlet

Section 5 – Meridians and Time Zones

- Lines of longitude run from the North Pole to the South Pole
- **Lines of longitude are known as Meridians**
- **The Prime Meridian** (0 degree longitude) **splits the world into eastern and western hemispheres.** It runs through London through Greenwich, England.
- **Different parts of the earth have different times – the world is divided into 24 different time zones**

